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S. Wright's Reply to
O'Connell's Letters
to Methodist Ministers &c.

1839

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Wes. 1482

Rev R. A. Thornton

REPLY

TO THE

LETTERS OF DANIEL O'CONNELL, M.P.

ADDRESSED TO THE

MINISTERS AND OFFICE-BEARERS

OF THE

WESLEYAN METHODIST SOCIETY.

BY

SAMUEL WRIGHT, F.R.B.S.E.

FIRST PRESIDENT OF THE ROYAL MEDICAL, ROYAL PHYSICAL,
AND HUNTERIAN SOCIETIES, OF EDINBURGH, &c. &c.

*Est modus in rebus ; sunt certi denique fines,
Quos ultra citraque nequit, consistere rectum.—HORACE.*

Why should we be tender,
To let an arrogant piece of flesh threat us ;
Play judge, and executioner, all himself?—SHAKSPERE.

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TO

WILLIAM HERBERT, ESQ.

NOTTINGHAM.

MY DEAR SIR,

THE distinction you have attained in Methodism, by your practical exhibition of the Christian character, has suggested to me, whilst writing the following sheets, the propriety of my submitting them, when finished, to the exercise of your judgment. You have been pleased to express your admiration of the argument, and I know not therefore, how I can better promote the interest of the cause I have undertaken to defend, than by dedicating to you the entire of the performance.

With a hearty wish that all who share with you in the common name of Christian, may, in the "great day of accounts," present a title to it, equally clear,

I beg to subscribe myself,

My dear Sir,

Your very affectionate Friend,

SAMUEL WRIGHT.

21, High Pavement, Nottingham,

Aug. 21, 1839.

REPLY

TO

DANIEL O'CONNELL, M.P.

SIR,

PERMIT me for a short time to occupy your attention whilst I attempt a reply to your letters, addressed to the "Ministers and Office Bearers of the Wesleyan Methodist Societies of Manchester." Not being a resident at Manchester, and holding no office, ministerial or otherwise, in connexion with Methodism, my interference may be deemed somewhat presumptuous, especially as I have neither solicited nor received from that body any authority for making such reply. But whilst it regrets me that amongst Wesleyan Ministers there should be such a dearth of determination upon a subject which vitally concerns their interest and their character, I am happy in the fact, that privilege has been sufficiently propitious to allow me, humble and insignificant though I am, to defend the religion in which my ancestors lived happily and died resignedly—in which I profess to be instructed, and through which I hope to be saved—from the unguarded, wicked calumny, of a bold and a bad man.

Let it be understood, that against you I entertain no feelings of prejudice, whether political or personal ; with some of your parliamentary exertions my own

opinions have often heartily accorded, and had I thought that the sin you have lately committed against the body to which I am attached, and in whose services I worship, had rather been accidental than a trade, I should have spared myself the trouble of repudiating your charges, affluent as they are of blight and blasphemy. Truth, Sir, is ever its own justifier, of which it is required that no man shall be ashamed, before an assembly however large, or an antagonist however skilful ; but divested as you are of that noble attribute, the sacred watchword of nature, you lose the character for which you have been so long distinguished—of being able, like the lion in the desert, “to roar without a reply, and ravage without resistance.”

Between you and myself there is a great and a serious difference—so far as it concerns our ages, your years exceed even the treble of my own ; and your authority, and influence, and learning, are of such amount, that a resemblance thereof it may never be permitted me to possess — be charitable, therefore, whilst I treat the subject whereon we are at issue, for I am rude of method and rough of speech ; and whatever of faultiness may characterize me, I have simply to ask, that you will allow the honesty of the endeavour to sanctify the humility of the means.

Your letters declare you to belong to that class so ably described by Burke, as wicked enough “to unplumb the dead to find bullets to assassinate the living” —they are heartless, and cold, and cruel : you have been treacherous without method, and a hypocrite without deceiving—falsehood upon falsehood, calumny upon calumny have you heaped in such dire and dread

abundance, as to justify the belief, that vice has looked into your heart, and left its likeness there for ever. You are one of the group of slanderers, who, like the chorus of the Eumenides, go searching about for their prey with eyes that drop poison ; but no spirit of protection like that which guarded the three captives in Babylon, hovers around you, and you deceive yourself, in imagining that with a swagger and a leer you can enter the furnace of Wesleyan Methodism and come out without a singe.

But come, let us reason together for a few moments, and endeavour to discover those regions of certainty which you have busily engaged yourself in colonising with untruths.—I shall begin with your first letter.* It is there asserted—

I. “ I have several objections to this manifesto of yours (Wesleyans.) The first is, your claims to be considered friendly to full religious liberty.—And for this simple reason—that the Wesleyan Methodists, in the person of their founder, and from his days, have upon all occasions shewn themselves the enemies of freedom of conscience.” p. 3.

This is a matter of opinion—see how it contrasts with matters of fact. John Wesley never opposed any Protestant sect that he believed to preach the gospel sincerely ; and if he did not believe so, he never persecuted them. He was educated for the Church of England, but left it, that he might preach to the world instead of to a parish : yet he continued to love the Church, and had no objection to his ministers and

* It is here observed, that for the sake of distinction, the passages in Mr. O'Connell's letters as they are successively taken up for the purpose of refutation, will be printed in small type and marked by numerals.

adherents receiving the sacrament from it. He opposed in all sincerity the doctrines of the Church of Rome—that “all heretics ought to be *compelled* to receive what they call the true *faith*: to be *forced* into the Church, or out of the world.” He anathematised the abominable edict of Augsburg,* which was contrary to right views of the Church, and nugatory of christian freedom. Nay, let us take his own words.—“With persecution I have nothing to do. I persecute no man for his religious principles. Let there be as boundless a freedom in religion as any man can conceive.” Vol. 15. p. 214. How then could he be an enemy of freedom of conscience?—That the same principles of good feeling and fellowship which actuated him, have also continued without impoverishment amongst his people, is proved by the friendship which obtains between themselves and other religious denominations, and by their ever putting into practice the affectionate maxim, “Let brotherly love continue.”

II. “You (Wesleyans) at least appeared, if you were not, amongst the most ardent supporters of the enemies of English Protestant dissenters.” p. 4.

Wesleyans are dissenters, inasmuch as they, like many other religious bodies, have no direct connexion with the Church, and receive no benefit from it. If, according to your own showing, they have been the enemies of dissenters, then have they been their own enemy for others’ sake—how you reconcile this with your charge that they are bigots, and the enemies of religious liberty, I leave you to determine.

* Sämtliche Schriften, t. 16. p. 2016.

III. "He (Wesley) was in 1779 one of the principal founders or managers of that Protestant Association, which in June 1780 very nearly achieved the destruction of London, by one of those insurrectionary movements which are at the present day called *émeutes*. &c., p. 4.

I am afraid that your information upon this subject, like Dogberry's reading and writing, has come by nature. Mr. Wesley was neither concerned in the originating nor in the managing of the Protestant Association. *He never was a member of it*; and in June, 1780, at the time of the riots, he was preaching the gospel in Scotland and in the north of England! But of the nature of the Protestant Association, and of Lord George Gordon's riots, you are either wilfully or accidentally ignorant. Know then, that it was never the design of that Association to commit the slightest outrage upon public decency or order. Their aim was to organize Protestantism, to promote union and fidelity amongst themselves, and quietly to petition against a bill for repealing some of the penal statutes against the Roman Catholics. Lord George Gordon, their President, though subject to occasional fits of mania, was scrupulously quiet and decorous, and only committed himself by requesting that forty-four thousand persons, the number that had signed the petition, should go with him to the House of Commons to sanction its presentation: and one of the clauses of his advertisement ran thus,—“Resolved, that the magistrates of London, Westminster, and Southwark, are requested to attend, that their presence may over-awe and control any riotous or evil-minded persons, who may wish to disturb the legal and peaceable deportment of his majesty's

subjects." What intention could be more honest, what resolution more orthodox?—Their petition was presented, and on the division of the house, it was found that there were one hundred and ninety-two against it, and only six for it. They went away quietly, and it was not until some hours afterwards that any symptoms of riot commenced, when they were found to proceed, as is usual, from the rabble and blackguards whom the occasion had attracted, but who had no connexion whatever with the Association. And "out of the forty-four thousand persons who had signed the petition of the Protestants, *not one was to be found among those who were convicted, tried, or even apprehended on suspicion.*"* "The crimes which were perpetrated," says Lord Erskine, were "committed in broad day,—and in the delirium of drunkenness, by an unarmed banditti—without a head—without plan or object—a banditti, with whom the associated Protestants had no manner of connexion, and whose cause they overturned, dishonoured, and ruined." Dr. Johnson was an eye witness of many of the proceedings, and in his letters to Mrs. Thrale, declares that "when they were plundering the Session-House and Old-Bailey, their number did not equal a hundred." Amongst those who were tried, there was "not one individual of the smallest respectability or good fame; they were negroes, Jews, gypsies, and vagabonds of every description; the very refuse of society." Their undeterminate mode of destruction proves, that whatever might have been the feelings of the Association, the motives of the mob were indiscriminate; for they destroyed alike the houses of Pro-

* Erskine's Defence of Lord George Gordon.

testants and Papists, law courts, prisons, and whatever was in their way.—Thus have I proved to you, that so far from Wesley having any connexion with either the Association or the riots, even the members of that Association themselves, were not criminal.

IV. “On the 17th of February in that year, that very Association presented their unanimous thanks to John Wesley for his exertions in their cause.” p. 4.

Presented him a vote of thanks in February of 1780, *for what was done in the June following!* If this be not substituting the *post hoc* for the *propter hoc*, I am a stranger to logic.

V. “He (Wesley) had actually the audacity to publish and argue that this insurrection for the destruction of Catholic property, Catholic places of worship, and Catholic lives, was nothing less than a Popish plot.” p. 4.

I have refuted one part of your allegation by showing that the object of the riots was not the destruction of Catholic property alone : the other part you have falsified, and, I fear, designedly. There was a letter published in Mr. Wesley’s name in “Defence of the Protestant Associations of England”—a performance of Father O’Leary, a Capuchin friar in Dublin, who imposed this pamphlet upon the world in Mr. Wesley’s name, *and then wrote an answer to it.* Wesley himself says, (vol. 15. p. 218.) “In my first Letter I have only *three lines* in defence of a tract published in London. But I have not one line in defence of the Associations either in London or elsewhere.” So that whilst a Catholic, and a priest too, infallible of course, would

publish a letter in another man's name,* full of gross misrepresentation and falsehood, we need not much wonder if the riots of 1780 were the performance of a Popish rabble. Your sect, you know, have ever been little respecters of persons;—they burnt the house of Inquisition in Italy and then declared that the heretics had done it; and in the pretty scheme of gunpowder-plot, they contrived to spread a report that it was altogether the work of the Puritans.†

VI. "You (Wesleyans) protest against the tax for the teaching and maintenance of systems of religion, which you believe to be false and imperious. With you I join in that protest, &c." p. 4.

Then whence arises the difference of opinion? In the beginning, you quarrel with Methodists for making their protest, and then you say, "with you I join in that protest." You actually falsify your own statements. Nay, you render negative what you afterwards declare to be the common creed and custom of Catholics—"that the money of all should be applied to the education of

* Mr. Wesley's case however is not solitary. One of the Romish priests, whom their own Molanus calls a barbarous imposter, (*Hist. Imag.* l. 3. c. 36.) forged an epistle from Cyril of Jerusalem to Austin, about the miracles of Jerom, in which purgatory and other fooleries are defended. Whereas Cyril himself *died 30 years before Jerom.*

† I could name various instances in which the Papists in all ages have endeavoured to ascribe to the Christians the origin of all evil and abomination. "Existimant omnis publicæ cladis, omnis popularis incommodi Christianos esse causam. Si Tiberis ascendit in mœnia, si Nilus non ascendit in arva, si cœlum stetit, si terra movit, si fames, si lues, statim Christianos ad Leones." —Tertul. *Apol.* §. 40.

"The earthquakes in South America are attributed by the priests and friars, to the heretics, the Inglezes, who pollute their soil; it is their presence which has drawn rain from heaven upon the dry country of Peru, and washed away the mud dwellings in which the true believers had formerly lived in safety; and the same unholy presence has caused the mines to fail."—Southey's *Essays*, vol. 2.

every one," p. 8. Yet you are ready to join the Methodists in their protest that it shall *not*.—I leave it with you.

VII. "What a blow it gives to the payment of church-rates by Protestant Dissenters or Roman Catholics in England," &c. p. 4.

Not at all. You have forgotten the argument on which the Wesleyans based their objection—"doctrines false and injurious." No dissenter believes that the doctrines of the Church of England are false and *injurious*—between the cases, therefore, there is no parallel. And as regards Papists paying church-rates, it is a subject not to discuss here; at any rate you cannot make it to bear upon the question at issue, whilst you remember that Roman Catholics within the British dominions *are living under a Protestant government*.

VIII. "It is quite true that there was an edition of the Rhemish or Douay Bible that contained notes in which the civil power was sought to be justified in inflicting persecution for religious dissent. But there are indeed, very few copies in existence containing such notes; and all the copies in use by the clergy, or in use in Catholic schools, colleges, or private houses, are quite free from them."* p. 5.

To this I answer, that Blair's Letters to Wm. Wilberforce, London, 1819; Kenny's Enquiry concerning some Doctrines of the Church of Rome, London, 1818; and the Digest of the Evidence upon the State of Ireland by Messrs. Phelan and O'Sullivan, furnish almost the substance of the controversy which arose from the republication of the Rhemish Testament and Douay Bible, *with all the persecuting notes in Ireland* in 1816. And from the researches of M'cGhee and O'Sullivan, it appears that the book was reprinted

* "The multitudinous copies published in England and Ireland in recent times are quite free from them," &c. p. 5.

at Cork in 1818, with all the antisocial and persecuting annotations; and even *another separate edition* of the New Testament at Cork in 1818, with the identical matter of that of 1816.*

IX. "The next allegation of yours to which I object is, that the Catholic version of the Holy Scriptures is notoriously corrupt and unfaithful.—Such a charge applies not to the Catholic, but to the Protestant version," &c. p. 5,

Let us then inquire into the correctness of the Romish and Protestant versions of scripture. And first the Romish version. That it is "corrupt and unfaithful," I will prove, 1stly. From the difference of opinion which has prevailed amongst Papists themselves respecting their text; and 2ndly. From the fact, that if the bible have been their exclusive guide, the features of their history in all ages, declare such bible to be a corruption of the originally revealed word of God.

All the versions of the Romish bible in use before the translation of the Vulgate were confused and contradictory. At the commencement of the Christian era, the Latin was gradually supplanting the Greek language, and at last prevailed entirely in the Western Church. The Latin Church possessed, as Augustine tells us,† a great many versions of the Scriptures, whose authors were *unknown*. Most of them were remarkable for their Hebraisms and Syriasms, particularly in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark. Now, there were comparatively few members of the Western Church skilled in Hebrew, at least so intimately as to display it in writing Latin; whence, the most probable conjecture is, that the earliest editions of the Bible in use in the Roman Church were *translations made by Jews*.

* Prot. Jour. 1836. † De Doctrin. Christ. lib. 2. c. 11.

Those versions of the New Testament which were not remarkable for their Hebraisms &c. were translations made by private individuals for amusement; for whenever a man thought himself to be sufficiently master of Greek to attempt a translation, he did translate it. These different versions at last became public, were termed Ante-Hieronymian, and universally contradicted one another.—See as a single example Col. 2. 15. as cited by Hilary, de Trin. lib. 1. c. 13, and the same passage as quoted by Augustine, contra Faustum, lib. 16. c. 29.—These versions, confused and contradictory as they were, were used in the Romish Church until the time of Jerome, whose sagacity taught him to renounce them all as inauthentic; and to re-translate the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek texts. This he did with much care and skill, and though his performance was at first somewhat disregarded, yet it received such approval from Pope Gregory I. that ever since the seventh century it has been almost exclusively adopted by the Romish Church, under the name of the Vulgate version.

Having shown the impurity of the Papal Scriptures before the time of Jerome, I have next to consider the correctness of his edition. Its universal adoption throughout the Western Church, rendered a multiplication of copies necessary, and with them, new errors began to be introduced by the intermixture of the two versions—the Old Italic, and Jerome's. For some, not being satisfied with the exclusive use of the new text, were desirous of correcting the old one by it, and so printed them in parallel columns—the originator of which practice was Cassiodorus. The version of Jerome,

therefore, became corrupted with that which it was intended to supersede.

By the command of Charlemagne, Alcuin, in the eighth century, attempted a correction of it; but however good the design, it bore no resemblance to the execution, for the mistakes of copyists made the confusion still more desperate.

In the eleventh century, Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, essayed its improval, but in vain; and similar was the success of Cardinal Nicholas and other divines in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. They declared in fact, that the manuscripts of the middle ages bore no resemblance to the earlier ones, nor they to one another.

Stephens, in the years 1528, 1532, 1534, 1540, 1545, and 1546, attempted to remedy such distraction by publishing his critical editions of the Vulgate; but they incurred the displeasure of the Doctors of the Sorbonne, and John Hentenius, a divine of Louvain, was employed to prepare a new edition. This was censured by others, and Lucas Brugensis, in 1573, published another version.

The labours of all who had preceded him, being much disapproved of by Sixtus V. he commanded a revision to be made. This was done with some care, himself superintending it, and in 1590 it was published at Rome; and though bearing little resemblance to any previous editions, it was regularly authenticated by the Council of Trent. But this version was found to be so egregiously incorrect, that the next Pope, Gregory XIV. *actually caused it to be suppressed*; and Clement VIII. published *another authentic* edition of the Vulgate in

1592. Which of these Popes is to be regarded as infallible?

Have not Cardinal Cajetan, Melchior Canus,* Payva Andradius, Cardinal Bellarmine, and numerous others, completely discarded the decree of the Council of Trent, for the most part renounced the Vulgate, studied the original Hebrew and Greek texts, and reasoned† like Protestants?‡ How many are the texts which Lyra's exceptor and Brugensis differ about? Nay, even some of your Popes, convinced of the abominations and heterodoxy of the Romish Church, have imperfectly obeyed its injunctions, and have been denounced as heretics. Adrian VI. writes—De Sac. Confir. Art 4.—that many Popes of Rome have been heretics. And two or three general councils condemned Pope Honorius for heresy.

The custom of Papists is, and ever has been, "to expound Scripture in the sense of the Church, and according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers." But the Fathers themselves have been corrupted, and spurious treatises fabricated and published as genuine works. It has been incontrovertibly established by James, in his learned work on the corruptions of the Fathers, that no less than *one hundred and eighty seven*

* The latter says, Loc. Theol. 3. 3.—that some of the peculiarities of the modern Church of Rome are not expressly recorded in the Canonical books. "Non omnia quæ ad doctrinam Christianam pertinent, esse etiam in sacris literis expressa. Nam perpetuam Mariæ virginitatem—conversionem panis et vini in corpus et sanguinem Christi—non ita expressa in libris canonicis invenies."

† The Notes of De Lyra, who died in 1310, were appended to an edition of the Latin Vulgate in 1472, in 7 vols. folio, and were the first Comment ever printed.—Townley's Biblical Literature, vol. 2. p. 18.

‡ See Sir H. Lynde's Byway. Sec. 4.

treatises have been forged by the Papists, and attempted to be palmed upon the world as the genuine works of the ancient writers. The celebrated "Decretal Epistles" and the "Donation of Constantine," were both notorious forgeries.* They forged Councils which never existed—as Concil. Sinuessan. Concil. Rom. sub Silvestr.†—Agobardus, bishop of Lyons, (writes bp. Usher) complained about eight hundred years ago, that "the Antiphonary used in his church had many fantastical things in it, and that he therefore corrected much of it, by cutting off what seemed superfluous, light, or blasphemous."‡ And Lindanus complained that "not only Apocryphal matters out of the Gospel of Nicodemus and other toys are thrust in, but even the secret prayers (yea, alas ! for shame and grief, the very canon varying and redundant) are defiled with most filthy faults.

The Papists have supplemented the word of God with writings which are clearly apocryphal, viz., Tobit and Judith, the Book of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, the two Books of Maccabees, Esdras, and a new part of Esther and Daniel. None of these books were received as belonging to the Holy Scriptures by the Jewish Church, "to whom were committed the oracles of God."§ Neither were they received by the ancient Christian Church, as appears from the sixteenth canon of the Council of Laodicea ; in which is a catalogue of the books of Scripture, but there is no mention of these.

The Papists maintain the authority of such books on

* Vid. Lathbury's State of Popery and Jesuitism in England.

† Combe's Forgeries in Councils. London, 1695. passim.

‡ Agobard ad Cant. Lud. de Correct. Antiphon. p. 396.

§ Rom. iii. 2.

the ground of Tradition. But if the Popes and priests have been the keepers of such Tradition, why have they never divulged it to the Church? It was totally unknown to Luther, Melancthon, Zuinglius, Calvin, Beza, Peter Martyr, Bucer, &c., all of whom were once Papists. And what became of their Tradition in the interval of the Pontificate of Nicholas IV. and Celestine V. when there was no Pope for *two years and a half*; or in those bloody wars which attended the election of a Pope, as in the choice of Damasus?

Thus then, have I proved that your versions of the Bible have been, and are, extensively corrupted; that the pretended authority of the Fathers is no authority at all; that you have added unto the Bible for Popery's sake, Books that are not of divine origin; and that the tradition of the Romish Church is altogether a fiction.

We will now pass to the second head, viz., that if the Bible have been your exclusive guide, the features of your history in all ages, declare such Bible to be a corruption of the originally revealed Word of God. What do the religious and the political histories of the Romish Church declare? 1. The supremacy and infallibility of the Pope. 2. An attempt to supersede or cheat the justice and mercy of God by the grant of Indulgences.* 3. Prohibition of marriage amongst priests; regarding which Coster blasphemously says in his vade-mecum, *which was approved of by four Universities*, "Gravius peccat sacerdos, si matrimonium contrahat, quam si fornicetur et domi concubinum

* See Stebbing's Hist. of Reformation, Lardner's Cab. Cyclop. i. 24, and Rivet, Apologia pro V. M. lib. ii. cap. 9.

foveat.* 4. An open countenance of prostitution. Matthew Paris tells us, that Cardinal Hugo, in his speech to the people of Lyons, said, "Friends, when we came hither, we found three or four brothels, and now, at our departure, we leave but one, and that one reacheth from the east-gate to the west-gate." And when told of their impious licensings at Rome, Bonnonia, &c., they use the words of St. Augustine, "Aufer meretrices de rebus humanis, turbaveris omnia libidinibus."† 5. Refusing to live in peace with all men, or to love their neighbours as themselves; by the encouragement of private murder and public massacre, as instanced in the destruction of the Albigenses, and of the inhabitants of Savoy, France, Bohemia, Poland, Germany, Ireland, England, &c. Together with idolatry, and numerous other vices.

Now, either these practices, which constitute the *discipline* of Popery wherever it becomes dominant, are or are not, countenanced by the Scriptures, which you preach and teach one to another. If your Scriptures do countenance them, then they are corrupt and unfaithful, for they reveal not the will of God concerning you, neither do they teach you to walk in his commandments. But if the Scriptures of the Church of Rome do not justify the religious and political discipline of Popery, then are you all infidels and unbelievers, from the least even unto the greatest.

These features of Romanism, the accuracy of which

* Costeri Enchiridion, cap. 15, prop. 9. p. 459, Edit. 1587.

† De Ordine, lib. ii. cap. 12.

‡ "The right use of images," says the Council of Trent, Sep. 25. Par. 2. "is to honour them by *bowing down before them*."

you cannot deny, being the exact converse of all Protestant doctrine, and in direct defiance of the gospel of Christ, would not Methodists have been guilty of unblushing hypocrisy, nay, of flagrant unfaithfulness to God, had they given them a sanction? How could they defend, and how can you complain of their not defending, a system at once nugatory of all virtuous and christian rectitude?—Rightly then, did they, with that devotion which characterised their illustrious founder, and which they piously perpetuate, oppose in all sincerity the toleration of a sect, who either designedly and for wicked purposes, teach as the doctrine of heaven the gross corruptions of mankind, or who openly and practically deny the entire of the gospel of God.

Having proved the corruption of the Romish Scriptures, and so refuted one part of your allegation, I will proceed to the disproof of the next, viz., where you charge the Protestant version with being inaccurate. It was scarcely necessary for you to tell us that Tyn-dal's, Coverdale's, and the Bishops' Bibles, which were used in the reigns of Henry VIII. and Elizabeth, were imperfect. James himself said so, and authorized a new version. But whatever might have been their faults, *you, a Papist*, should at least have been silent on the matter, seeing that they bear no manner of comparison with the versions which your sect have employed in all ages. But the question is respecting the correctness of the present authorized Protestant text.

Its fidelity I will prove, firstly, Because it is nearly faultless when compared with the main sense of the original; and, secondly, Because it teaches whatever is essential to the moral as well as to the spiritual

interests of mankind ; granting none of the liberties which constitute the abominations of Popery.

1st. It is nearly faultless when compared with the main sense of the Hebrew. The translation was conducted, not by one individual, but by forty-seven of the most erudite scholars and divines in the kingdom, who were occupied three years in the task. They not only carefully examined and scrutinized the sources, but compared them, and their own performance, with all the branches in the Latin, Spanish, Italian, German, and French languages, until they had completed a version, indisputably the most correct extant. Of which says Miss Freeman Shepherd, a most accomplished biblical critic, *and a Papist too*, “the *original* from which it was taken is *alone* superior to the Bible translated by King James”—an opinion in which your countryman, Dr. Adam Clarke, whose equal Romanism has rarely been privileged to possess, says, “my heart, my judgment, and my conscience coincide.”* Since this translation was made, biblical scholars have been continually in the habit of reading in Hebrew and Greek, the Old Testament and the New ; yet we never hear that the sense of our translation is so different from the original that it does not genuinely teach us the way to heaven. That a more polished and classical rendering could be given I am perfectly aware, because our own language is more extensive and erudite than it was in the reign of James ; but I maintain that the errors of which you complain, and whereon you cite the names of Louth, Newcombe, Wakefield, and others, are errors of *elegance* and not of *sense*. If you are at all acquainted with Hebrew, you

* Preface to Commentary, p. 19.

must be aware that it would be next unto an impossibility for one man to give a correct translation of the books of Job, Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Hosea. They are all of them highly figurative, fervid, magnificent, and full of abrupt transitions. The language of Job and Isaiah is polished—that of Ezekiel and Hosea is harsh and elliptical. And in the book of Job are certain idioms which no man can understand who is not well read in Arabic. Thus also with the New Testament. The Syriac, or Western Armenian language was spoken both in Syria and Mesopotamia, and after the captivity it became vernacular in Galilee. Hence, though the sacred writers of the New Testament expressed themselves in Greek, their ideas were often Syriac, and they consequently used many Syriac idioms, and a few Syriac words. Some of the Greek Testament is of the same degree of purity as that which was spoken in Macedonia, and that in which Polybius wrote his Roman History. And again, it displays examples of Grecian dialects, and in some instances, as Acts xvii. 28. 1 Cor. xv. 33. and Tit. i. 12. the original is almost rigidly poetical. So that out of any number of translations, scarcely two might be *literally* in resemblance, and yet the substance of the original correctly preserved in the whole of them. Thus, Bishop Louth's translation of Isaiah, and Dr. Mason Good's translation of Solomon's Song, and the book of Job, though in language much at variance with the edition of King James, in their facts are perfectly accordant with it. And I challenge you to produce any instance, in which our version is unfaithful to the Hebrew or Greek in subjects *vitally concerning the Christian doctrine.*

2ndly. The purity of the Protestant text is argued for, because it teaches whatever is essential to the moral as well as to the spiritual interests of mankind, countenancing none of the liberties which constitute the abominations of Popery. In proof of the first part I refer you to the writings of all Protestant divines who have made our Gospel their text-book, and I invite a contradiction of my statement; and for the latter, I may refer you to my previous remarks upon the criminal and insurrectionary movements of Papists, which Protestantism has overcome by a direct application of the genuine word of God.

Your abuse of the Wesleyans has mainly arisen from their having opposed a system which had for one of its objects the countenancing, nay, the furtherance of Popery. Tell me, again I ask you, if in a substantial conviction of the inauthentic nature of the Romish Bible, of the heterodoxy of the Romish Church, and of the crimes of Romish policy, the Wesleyans had hesitated to oppose them, would they not have been condemnable as hypocrites and punishable as unbelievers? You know they would; that they have but been doing their duty, and yet, as your creed adviseth, you persecute them in slander and in falsehood.

You tell us we should know that at the period when the Latin bible was printed by Faust, "almost every body who could read, understood Latin." On the contrary, very few could understand it. When the Liturgy and Scripture were first written in Latin at Rome, it was intelligible to all. The service did not afterwards change, but the language did; and, eventually, both the Romish scripture and Liturgy were in an unknown

tongue. Erasmus asserts, "the vulgar tongue was not taken from the people, but the people departed from it."* During the dark ages, as I suppose you know, literature was a blank; and, at the period you allude to, learning had just begun to revive. And what Latin the people could *articulate*, was the dogma of the Church of Rome, which priests taught, but laymen never understood. Nay, long afterwards, when Christobal da Losada was suffering at the stake for protestantism, and beating the priests in argument, they exchanged the Spanish for the Latin language, *that the people might not understand them.*†

X. "About 800 editions of the Bible or New Testament were printed and circulated in Catholic Europe before the so-called Reformation, and before the name of Protestant was known in the world." p. 5.

I dare say that eight *thousand* editions of the Romish Bible were *written* before the Reformation; as I before told you, it was not uncommon in the early and more learned age of Popery for men to have their own versions—but that 800 editions were *printed and circulated* by the authority of the Church I deny. The Bible of Faust, the first printed, I believe, was brought out only 70 years before the Reformation—if 800 editions followed it in a little more than half a century, they were very hasty performances.

XI. "A number, exceeding 200, of these editions, were in the vernacular tongues of the different countries in which they were published, and were thus accessible to every body who could read." p. 5.

That statement I deny altogether. Prove it. Later even than this period, viz., at the Council of Trent, it

* Decl. ad. Censur. Paris, 12. §. 41. † Stebbing, Hist. of Reformation, 1, 298.

was urged that the public ought to be prohibited the use of the Bible, and Cardinal Madruccio, with genuine Protestant spirit, said, that Germany was scandalized at the bare mention of depriving the people of the light of Scripture, which according to the Apostle, ought to be the subject of men's continual meditation. "Yes," rejoined Pacheco "*but this reading of the Bible was prohibited in Spain, with the consent of Paul II.*" "We grant it," replied Madruccio, "Paul II. or any other Pope might be mistaken, but the Apostle Paul could not."* And when Mollio, a professor in the University of Bologna, was charged with heresy by a rival professor in the schools, his signal defeat of the whole council of accusers compelled them to dismiss him with the remark, that he taught what was true, but it was *not expedient* that it should be taught.†

XII. "These editions of the Bible, in the vernacular tongue, were almost exclusively published in the countries that afterwards continued faithful to Catholicity," &c. p. 5.

Faithful to Popery! You have for gotten the Reformation and its consequences. Faithful to Popery! No country under heaven was ever faithful to it. In the fourteenth century, long before the reformers arose, it was attacked by Dante, in his treatise "*De Monarchia*," and some of Petrarch's epistles speak a language only inferior to Luther's in severity, though more elegant. Italy ‡ itself, under the very eye of the Pope, would have yielded in its majority to the great work of reli-

* Fleury. cxlii. n. 57.

† Stebbing's Hist. of Reformation, 1. p. 315.

‡ Seckendorf—lib. 3. p. 68, quotes a writer who states that a certain nobleman was prepared to lead forth an army of 6000 reformers, if a signal were given for opposing the cruelties of Romanism and Pope Paul.

gious enlightenment, had not its unsettled and divided state prevented it. A principality or a republic, here a few scholars, and there a band of simple citizens, they manifested for a time their inclination to embrace reform, but no help was given them by the invigorating bonds of national sympathy, and though many, led to acknowledge the true doctrines of eternal life, found thereby the means of salvation for themselves, no legacy was left for posterity—no monument raised, round which their descendants might gather with a holy feeling of joy and confidence in the power of the gospel. And Germany would in its entirety have been speedily reformed, but that its Protestant states were linked by indissoluble political ties with those that adhered to the Romish Church.—Faithful “forsooth.”

XIII. “Protestantism was introduced into England by Henry VIII. and into Denmark by Christiern II.—two of the greatest monsters that ever disgraced, not only the throne, but human nature.” p. 6.

What! worse than Pope Boniface VII., who put out his Cardinal’s eyes?—Worse than Pope Stephen, who defiled the seat of St. Peter with nameless sacrilege?—Worse than Pope John XXIII., who denied the immortality of the soul?—Or than John III., *alias* XII., who drank the devil’s health, *with all the honors*? If you can prove to me that they were worse than these reverends and authorities of the Romish Church, I will admit with you that they were very bad indeed!

XIV. “Is it not the right as well as the duty of each individual to examine and decide for himself by selecting from the written word of God, and from that alone, the tenets of his religion?” p. 7.

Assuredly it is. But how long have the Papists been acquainted with this as a fact, and how long have they taught it as a maxim? You learnt it of the Protestants, who sealed it with their blood. When cruelly “memorizing another Golgotha” in a wanton, barbarous murder of the poor Waldenses, Albigenses, and Bohemians, who did you no harm, and only prayed for their consciences and their lives—was the doctrine then promulgated which you now profess to teach?—Was it common amongst you in that eventful period, when a few short days saw thirty thousand Protestants in and about Paris maliciously butchered for reading the word of God after their own manner and liking?—Was it an article of your creed, when in Ulster alone, a hundred and fifty thousand souls were hastily sent to judgment at the dictate of papal violence? No! as I before told you, your Bible is murderous and sanguinary, no revelation of God, but a manufacture of your own. And had not the law of nations boldly arrested your career, and limited your authority, even now, as aforetime, you would dictate to our reason with the faggot and the knife. And will you still dare to denominate the men who oppose Romanism, the enemies of “freedom of conscience?”

XV. “The Catholic Church at every period, and in every country has been the promoter of education.” p. 8.

Were I to call this an impudent and a designed falsehood, I should but be doing it justice. But I will leave you to judge of its truth after having referred you to a few facts. Until the commencement of Protestantism, so far from educating your laity, you did not even

• See Baxter's Key for Catholics, p. 419. Edit. 1839.

teach, or allow them to read their Bible. Certain passages of it were expounded by the priests, and the book, after having been deposited in a secret place, *was sacredly locked up*. Such amongst them as could read and were opulent you did not interfere with; but the poor and the needy you failed to remember in their several necessities. Superstition, the parent of ignorance, has always been steadily inculcated by the Romish Church. Thousands of Papists in Ireland at one time, knew not who Christ was further than that *he was a better man than St. Patrick*. Bishop Usher says, that they perished for want of knowing Christianity itself, while they went under the name of Catholics; but he could not persuade the Popish Priests that they should be taught their catechism. And when Dr. John White asked one of the Papists in Lancashire who Jesus Christ was? she answered, that, "sure it must be some good thing, or it would not have been put into the Creed."* Yes, and the chief prayer of many of them is,

"Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John,
Bless the bed that I lie on, &c."

But without alluding to the poor and the laity, I will go immediately to the head of the Church for a refutation of what you say.

Alphonsus de Castro, lib. i. cap. 4, and others of your own persuasion bear witness to the fact, that some Popes did not even understand their own grammar; "and one good man," says Wernerus, "being rudis literarum, was fain to get another Compope to say his

* See Preface to the Way of the Church, §. 13. where are many other instances.

offices, though it happened that they could not agree, and so a third was chosen, and his choice disliked ; and a fourth chosen, and so on, until there were six chosen Popes, *all alive at once.*" Platina, speaking of the priests, says, " how great ignorance of themselves, and of the Christian doctrine."* Will you still argue that the Romish Church in all ages has been the promoter of education ?

There are a few subjects of minor consideration which I shall not stop to refute, but will pass on to your Second Letter. I fear this was hastily written, for it singularly abounds in contradictions. In the first line you say that the "*Reply*" of the Wesleyans to your previous letter, " is an exquisite piece of impertinence ;" and in thirty lines further you tell them that they did *not answer it*, because it was unanswerable. Also, that their " malignity potently proclaims their sense of defeat." How can they be defeated, or have any sense of defeat, if they have never engaged in controversy with you ? At the commencement of the fourth page you say, that no society " has lent itself to worse politics than the Wesleyans ;" and in the two succeeding lines, you declare that there is *no definable quality about them*. In the third page you say that the history of Methodism scarcely exceeds eighty years. You ought to have known that it equals a hundred. And the fairest inference is that you did, but thought there would be no harm in slightly curtailing it, for in page 6, you speak of the " Centenary Book."

* In Vita Marcellini, Edit. Lugduni, 1512. 42.

You allude to the Papists Bramston and Mason having once been Methodist preachers, and make much of the circumstance. You may well, for theirs is a case of rarity. But you forget how many Papists have been converted to Protestantism.—That Luther himself was a Monk, and that Calvin once advocated the doctrines of the Church of Rome. You have also forgotten the singular conversion to Christianity of Bernardus Ochino, and Pietro Martire Vermigli, the one a Capuchin Monk, the other a man of family and an Augustine. Of the former of whom Charles V., said, when hearing one of his splendid Protestant sermons, “that man would make the stones weep.” Allow me to parallel your remark by telling you what a noble Christian minister, a converted Romish priest makes.

XVI. “Truth in an open controversy is in *no* danger from absurdity.” p. 3.

On the contrary, absurdities are often the means employed, and successfully too, for diverting the attention from “truth and soberness.” Lucian, you know, relates the story of a troop of monkeys performing a tragedy, the whole seriousness of which was disturbed by a wag throwing a handful of peas amongst them. This suggested Sheridan’s practice of always attempting to win by wit when he failed in argument; and I have no doubt your motive was the same, when you made a contemptible pun upon the name of Mr. Rigg.

XVII. “Those who entertain most absurd doctrines always shrink from argument, &c.” p. 3.

Then wherefore have atheists in all ages been so

fond, so solicitous of argument? But I beg pardon, perhaps you do not consider infidelity to be absurd!

XVIII. "Show me within that period, (80 years) that you (Wesleyans) have distinguished yourselves by any one act or declaration, or movement in favour of freedom of conscience or full religious liberty—indeed I may say, in favour of either civil or religious liberty, and I will blot out the word "hypocrisy," retract my charges, apologise most humbly, and write you down charitable christians, and not intolerants and bigots." p. 2.

Well then, I will tell you. I have previously shown, and if you be honest you will acknowledge it, that Romanism cripples a man's privileges, personal, secular, and religious. Wesleyans have opposed Romanism—then they have defended civil and religious liberty! But I will give you another example, and one equally striking. They have preached the gospel to, and advocated the emancipation of, the heathen race! Now I require you as a gentleman, one who ought to consider his word as binding as his oath, to retract the word "hypocrisy," and ask pardon of the Wesleyans for having uttered it.

XIX. "Oppression has not visited any caste, creed, or colour, without my giving my humble but zealous and active advocacy to the oppressed and against the oppressors." p. 5.

At this moment, the priests of Ireland* are wringing with threats of excommunication the pence from their starving laity, and yet refuse them the cup in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Do you ever attempt to remedy this oppression? Nay, how many are the

* Romish priests in all ages have been criminally covetous. Platina confesses,—“how great is the covetousness of the priests! especially those who rule all.” In Vita Marcel. Edit. Lug. 1512. 42.

thousands in Ireland to whom a shilling would be salvation, who are swathed in sackcloth, and starving upon ashes, whilst you, a pauper upon their pittance, are lapped in the roses of luxury, "and clothed in purple and fine linen!" Will you again tell us that your custom is to relieve the oppressed, or will you charge Wesleyans with illiberality in attempting to subvert Romanism?

XX. "Catholics have been victims for three centuries to their abhorrence of perjury, sacrificing their properties, their franchises, their liberties, their lives, rather than violate the sanctity of an oath." p. 5.

I rather doubt the sanctity of many of the oaths they have taken. For instance, to five of the conspirators of gunpowder plot, did Father Gerard administer the sacrament to confirm their oath of secrecy and determination.* But one of them divulged the scheme—do you not think there was more honesty in the breach than there would have been in the observance? But, as in the subject of education, I will go straight to the Pontifical chair to shew you how a Papist can take an oath and break it. In how many instances has the oath which relates to marriage and chastity been violated? Of Pope Innocent, one of his followers wrote the following distich.

Octo nocens pueros genuit totidemque puellas
Hunc merito potuit dicere Roma patrem.†

And equally bad were Popes—John XI. Sergius III. and John XII. *alias* XIII. ‡

* Winter's Confession, p. 50.

† Without giving a metrical translation, I may observe for the benefit of the general reader, that the couplet declares the gentleman of whom it was written, to have been the *father of sixteen children*.

‡ See Dominicus Soto de Instit. et Jure qu. 6. art. 1, cited by Rivet, Jesuita Vapulans, cap. 15, § 2.

XXI. "He (Wesley) was an intolerant bigot, who blew the flame of religious animosity until it burst into a conflagration in this great empire." p. 6.

What a "Mars of Malcontents" you are! How unlike that venerable man whose name you sneer at, and whose words and works you falsify, with the odious design of exciting disaffection amongst his people! Scarcely do I need to challenge you to give me an instance in which he ever attempted to excite animosity; nor is it requisite to show you that if he had done so, his own exertions would neither have been so prosperous nor so permanent.

"His life was gentle: and the elements
So mix'd in him, that Nature might stand up
And say to all the world—*This was a man!*"

Let me give to you his own words—the doctrines of his life; for the most charitable excuse that I can encourage is, that you have never read them. He says, vol. iv. p. 400,—“It is strange that every one does not see the sinfulness of railing at the clergy: if they be blind leaders of the blind, then (says Our Lord) ‘Let them alone.’ It (railing) can never do good, and has frequently done much harm.” Again he says, vol. viii. p. 197,—“Encourage whomsoever God is pleased to employ, to give himself wholly up thereto. Speak well of him wheresoever you are; defend his character and his mission. *Enlarge as far as you can his sphere of action.* Show him all kindness in word and deed; and cease not to cry to God in his behalf, that he may save both himself and them that hear him.” He remarks, when treating upon Christian perfection, vol. xi. p. 233,—“I entreat you, beware of bigotry. Let not

your love or beneficence be confined to Methodists only, &c." In his address to the clergy, he says, vol. xi. p. 251,—“In this spirit—of earnest and tender love—I desire to cast my bread upon the waters; it is enough if I find it again after many days.” Those sentences are a verbal epitome of his life. Can you, can any papist punctuate them?

XXII. “He began his career, a zealous priest of the Established Church, and actually passed over as such to America to convert the Indians to Church-of-Englandism. But the only feat he achieved there, for he did not convert a single Indian—was to excommunicate a respectable young lady who thought fit to disappoint *him* by marrying another suitor.” p. 6.

John Wesley did *not* go to America as a Church Missionary, neither did he want to convert the Indians to Church-of-Englandism. He went simply to preach the gospel, as chaplain to the colony, and though there might be no immediate proofs of souls being saved by his instrumentality, yet he laid, and especially in Savannah, the foundation for the future discipline of the minds of men in the great scheme of spiritual improvement—he united and organized them in friendly communion—not according to mere forms and ceremonies, but after the manner of those primitive times, “when form and fashion were not, but Paul the tent-maker and Peter the fisherman presided, yet with demonstration of the spirit and with power.” And “here,” says Dr. Whitehead, “we see the first rudiments of the future economy of classes and bands.”

As it respects the lady who would not marry *him*, the only difference between your tale and the truth is, that it was he who would not marry *her*. He was ena-

moured of a Miss Hopkey, and might have married her, but for the disclosure to him by some of his friends, of certain moral disqualifications on her part, which his generous and unsuspecting nature never led him to imagine. His attentions not having led to anything determinate, were declined: she married a Mr. Williamson in revenge, and immediately, with the assistance of her friends, set about a formal persecution of Mr. Wesley. He cautioned her with pastoral sincerity against several things that were blameable in her conduct, at which she became still more infuriated, and refused to acknowledge the preliminary regulations of the sacrament administration. He therefore, as a faithful minister, declined to admit her to that service.* And this is the whole secret of disappointment and excommunication.

XXIII. "His (Wesley's) second or third professions were—uncertainty, and some species of Popery!" p. 6.

This I will answer in his own words. "Indeed the report now current in Bristol was, 'That I was a Papist, if not a Jesuit! Some added, that 'I was born and bred at Rome;' which many cordially believed. O ye fools, when will ye understand that the preaching justification *by faith alone*, the allowing no meritorious cause of justification, but the death and righteousness of Christ, and no conditional or instrumental cause, but faith, is overturning Popery from the foundation?"†

XXIV. "One Peter Bohler converted him to Moravianism, and then he was to be a Moravian for ever." p. 6.

* See Watson's Life of Wesley, p. 40. et seq.

† Journal, August, 1739

For this passage you have no authority. So far from his having said that he was to be a Moravian for ever, he never admitted a conversion to the religion of that sect. He much admired Peter Bohler, and justly so, for he was a pious, praiseworthy man, and as Wesley said, in the hands of God, performed in England, a work "such as shall never come to an end till heaven and earth shall pass away." But all the conversion which he had from Bohler was what I will express in his own words—"by *him*, in the hand of the great God, I was clearly convinced of unbelief, of the want of that faith whereby alone we are saved with the full Christian salvation." That was his amount of conversion to Moravianism—an event which you are obliged to acknowledge, though I dare say in tears and sorrowing, will never come to an end, till nature awake from the swoon of ages, and the great era of the resurrection shall have commenced.

XXV. "Having put on record an odious character of those in connection with the Moravians, he adopted Antinomian Calvinism," &c. p. 6.

What a wrinkled legend of unworthy things is that sentence! He never preached but against Antinomianism all his life-time. How could he be an Antinomian, when he ever inculcated the principle, "be zealous and do the first works; lest, if you continue to *make void the law through faith*, God cut you off, and appoint you your portion with the unbelievers." vol. 8. p. 156. And he elsewhere says, vol. 11. p. 233. "Beware of Antinomian books; particularly of the works of Dr. Crisp and Mr. Saltmarsh. They contain many excellent things, and this makes them the more dangerous. O

be warned in time ! Do not play with the fire, do not put your hand on the hole of a cockatrice den," &c. And his most energetic remark occurs vol. 16 p. 133. "This (Antinomianism) has been a greater hindrance to the work of God, than any, or all others put together." And the "great revolt of Whitfield and Wesley," which you talk about, arose thus : They had for some time laboured together in harmony, but Mr. Wesley, impressed with the conviction that Calvinistic doctrines might lead to Antinomianism, published a sermon against absolute predestination, at which Mr. Whitfield took serious offence. "And," says Mr. Wesley, "he told me that he and I preached two different Gospels, and therefore he would not join with me, or give me the right hand of fellowship, but was resolved publicly to preach against me and my brother wheresoever he preached at all !" This was the "great revolt," the blame of which you attempt to lay upon Wesley.

XXVI. "He (Wesley) describes the Moravians with whom he had been long in communion, as 'swallowed up in the dead sea of stillness, opposing the ordinances, namely, prayer, the reading of the Scriptures, the frequenting of the sacraments and public worship,' &c. p. 6.

By *communion*, I suppose you mean *converse*, for that is what the word literally signifies, and I agree with its application in that sense ; but if you intend it to imply anything further than simple social intercourse between Wesley and the Moravians, then I deny it altogether. But what does all this tirade of quotation declare ? Simply, that there were certain observances and ceremonies of the Moravian Church which John Wesley thought to be improper. And in a spirit of Christian

candour, he said so. He never believed them to be infallible. Even in his earliest association with them he says, "Yet a few things I could not approve of," vol. ii. p. 103. And if he did not at first sight detect all their errors, what does it teach us? Why, that he was not supernatural—that like you and myself, "he was made a little *lower* than the angels."

XXVII. "The way in which Wesley, having secured his preachers, purified his religious system from the defilement of Antinomianism was this: he invented a two-fold mode of justification; one, without repentance, the love of God, or other works; the other, to which these works were essential. The former was for those who should die soon after their pretended experience of saving faith; the latter for those who had time and opportunity for performing them," &c. p. 7.

Wesley *invented a two-fold mode of justification!* The expression is only excusable from the fact of its having been made by a Papist. Wesley taught, after the manner of St. Paul, that a man is justified by *faith alone*, but not that he could be justified without repentance, or the love of God. On the contrary, he taught that repentance *follows* faith, but to this repentance he attached no actual *merit*. This was the faith which saved the thief upon the cross—"Therefore, we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law."* And let me ask you, how, without it those are to be saved, who, in a death-bed repentance, have not, as you express it, "time and opportunity for the performance of good works"? But if opportunities do occur, then good works will follow faith. And though Wesley preached that there is no righteousness *before* faith, yet he never said that there is none *after* it.

* Romans iii. 28.

“For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”* Thus, then, the “two-fold mode of justification,” which you say Wesley *invented*, is the same thing, but differently exhibited in the person of a sinner, who dies shortly after its realization, and in the case of one whose life is prolonged, so that the fruits of his justification may be seen in his good works. And for this *invention*, Wesley was indebted to the Epistles of Paul and James!

XXX. “He (Wesley) taught for many years that all persons under any of these three categories *would certainly be damned*:—

Firstly. All who were in heaviness through manifold temptations. Secondly. All those from whom God, for wise ends, permits an abstraction of spiritual comfort. Thirdly. All who walk in darkness, and have no light, and who, the prophet says, shall trust in the Lord, and stay himself upon his God.” p. 7.

These three categories you have borrowed from Wesley’s sermon on “The Wilderness State.” Two of them you have mis-quoted and corrupted, the third you have evidently been unable to comprehend. For a flat denial of your charge upon the first predicate, I will quote his comment from the identical page in which you found the passage, vol. 8, p. 339.† “Lastly, if darkness be occasioned by manifold, and heavy, and unexpected temptations, the best way of removing and preventing this, is to teach believers always to expect temptation. Above all, let them be instructed, when the storm is upon them, not to reason with the devil, but to pray; to pour out their souls before God, and show him of their trouble. And God will then bear witness to his word, and bring their souls out of trouble, &c.”

* James ii. 26.

† I may here remark, that my edition of Wesley’s Works is that of 1820.

The charge against the third category I will also refute by the very language which you have quoted. Wesley says, p. 337, "And him (who hath no light) we should advise, though he were still dark of soul, and had never seen the light of God's countenance, yet to trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God."

The second predicate does not occur in Mr. Wesley's sermon in the sense employed by you. And after a very diligent search and comparison, I am compelled to infer that you have either, like Father O Leary, manufactured it entirely, or that you have wilfully distorted the original for the sake of confusion.—"Qui non vult intelligi debet negligi."

XXVIII. "He (Wesley) a priest, consecrated Dr. Coke to be a bishop!"

Yes, but not in the modern sense. His ordination of Dr. Coke was in simple accordance with his views of primitive episcopacy, for he believed that the orders were identical, and denied that there was any distinction between them. His motives were very clearly expressed to his brother Charles in the following language.—"I firmly believe that I am a scriptural ἐπίσκοπος as much as any man in England, or in Europe. But this does in no wise interfere with my remaining in the Church of England; from which I have no more desire to separate than I had fifty years ago." It was an ordination for management and circuit superintendence, not for title or emolument.

XXIX. "Wesley, by the manner in which he instituted the governing powers of the Conference, formed a despotic oligarchy of the closest nature. The property of their chapels, &c. is vested absolutely in this oligarchy." p. 8.

In answer to the first clause, I will give you his own words to Whitfield upon the subject of freedom of opinion and mildness of behaviour. "O my brother, is it well for you or me to give the least hint of setting up our will or judgment against that of our whole society? Was it well for you once to mention a desire which they all solemnly declared they thought unreasonable, was not this abundant cause to drop any design which was not manifestly grounded on a clear command of our Lord? If our brother R. or P. desired anything and our other brethren disapproved of it, I cannot but think he ought immediately to let it drop. How much more ought you or I?" &c. vol. 16, p. 104—5.

Conference is composed of a hundred men, all of whom are responsible for their transactions, with which the Society becomes intimately conversant by publication and report. Does this look either like despotism or popery?

The power which conference has over chapel property, is so delicately balanced by the trustees, that the movements of the one must always be countenanced or opposed by the other. The subjects of management and disposal are settled by the mutual working and agreement of both parties. And the reasonableness, nay, the refinement of the system is proved by the fact, that if the power were exclusively in the hands of trustees, and a division took place amongst them, the majority might dispose of the chapels, or convert them into domicils and theatres. It was the want of such splendid legislature as Methodism presents, that put so many Presbyterian Churches into the hands of the Socinians. And yet you call this system despotic!

XXXI. "John Wesley himself so hated popular liberty, that amongst his vagaries, he actually offered the government of the day to raise a regiment to enable George III. to put down what he called the American Rebellion." p. 8.

Yes, but not to put it down as a Papist with fire and sword. That would have revolted the pious mind of Wesley, who like an angel of love's heaven ceaselessly prayed.

"That dove-like peace might reign on Britain's shore,
And war and slaughter vex our land no more."

But he did raise a regiment! Not after the manner of Jason, by sowing serpent's teeth that they might rise up armed men; but by admitting into his society and his service, such as were disposed to war against satan by preaching in all legitimacy the genuine gospel of God. And what a regiment it is! It is the Lord's doing, Sir,—“and marvellous in our eyes.” Yes, it has not only quieted rebellious America, and populated with saints, a savage land, but it has made Popery blush and look ashamed, and all its messengers of murder cease from their gluttony of death, and wonderingly stand still! It has scattered about our nation various little palaces—altars of Methodism—which look smilingly in the face of heaven, like light amongst clouds—spots that bloom even in the lap of horror—against which neither the gates of hell nor the myrmidons of Romanism can prevail—for ever.

“These temples of his grace,
How beautiful they stand!
The honor of our native place,
And bulwarks of our land.”

Having now, Sir, plainly, and, I think, faithfully, refuted your charge against Protestantism and Me-

thodists, I have humbly to solicit you to let that vice which prompted you to "sneer" at the venerable name of Wesley, forget its cunning, and blush itself to virtue. Venerable! yes, and to a degree which I hope you will be emulous to parallel. He has left a monument vital with mind, and vivid with immortality, which, "when thrones are crumbled, and dynasties forgotten, will stand the land-mark of its country's genius, rearing itself amid regal ruins and national dissolution, a mental pyramid in the solitude of time, beneath whose shade things may moulder, but round whose summit eternity must play." His thoughts, as they floated upon the streams of passing incident, wove an affectionate web of sympathy for "the sins and the sufferings of the children of men"—his words, variegated with eloquence, rose an accepted incense to Heaven, and it was sufficient for him that God blessed them with much approval. He lived the life, and answered the obligations of a pious man—he ministered unto humanity in its physical and spiritual necessities—he blended the two great antagonisms of nature, the Serpent and the Dove—Wisdom and Innocence—and having in all faithfulness fulfilled his mission, calm as a child, cradled in dreamless slumber, he died—and went to God. May your last end be like his!

In proof of the purity of his doctrine, and of his immortality in its perpetuation, I will say to you in the language which graces the tomb of Sir Christopher Wren, "*Si quæris monumentum, circumspice.*" It has flooded the dark regions of vice and Popery with such a stream of spiritual illumination, that "none but itself can be its parallel"—it has carried the gospel into every variety of clime, and taught it to every diversity of colour

—an heavenly Oasis in the great desert of humanity, it is not only a pattern to imitate, but an example to deter—regardless of worldly form and human ceremony, it has linked together the great with the mean, and the illustrious with the obscure—inspiring its votaries with that righteous faith and christian confidence, which enable them on the brink of the grave, to look back with pleasure and forward without apprehension, it has sent them, nurslings of immortality, into the presence and the communion of God !

It only remains for me to regret that you should have submitted such a bane to the world, and that it has needed such an antidote. “What I have writ, I have writ”—would it were worthier. I have replied to you in all sincerity and truthfulness, “nothing extenuating nor setting down aught in malice”—and what I have said here, I am ready to defend against you in public debate or otherwise, whenever and wherever you may choose. But I shall not conduct the controversy with any other man than yourself.

In conclusion, let me beseech you never again in thoughtlessness or envy to abuse either the motives or the name of Wesley—it is a great name, and meriting your admiration—it belonged to a man, with whom you stand in contrast, as rudeness to refinement; for between your natures and your works there is a difference, which will be sufficiently expressed when I say, that it distinguishes a pious from a profane man. The sphere of his fame and usefulness is too complicated for you to understand, and too mighty for you to contend against; and though in looking upon the little failings of Wesley, those whisperings which teach us that he

was but mortal, you are pleased to erect a monument of scorn where you ought to deposit a pearl of pity, remember, that your anathemas are but as so many trifles dropped into an ocean whose surface is boundless, and whose depths are not known—contending like the relics of Eneas' shipwreck, with a tide resistless and overwhelming.

"Rari apparent nantes in gurgite vasto."

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

SAMUEL WRIGHT.

W. DEARDEN, PRINTER, NOTTINGHAM.

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